



Bridging Youths and UN: Our Proposal for a IGO Youth Delegate Programme

DMUN Foundation

About Our Organization

The DMUN Foundation is a youth-led, international non-governmental organization that empowers young people to be active and valid stakeholders in the multilateral system.

Mainly, we provide opportunities for youths to learn about international relations, diplomacy, legislative bodies, social entrepreneurship, sustainability, and greater youth participation in the intergovernmental system.

Our vision is to enable youths to become active global citizens and future leaders through our programs and opportunities, receiving necessary skills and resources for them to contribute effectively and meaningfully to the objectives of sustainable development, peace, multilateralism, and the overall betterment of the world.

What is a Youth Delegate?

Youth delegates are young individuals (normally between the ages of 15-30) who actively participate in the decision-making processes of multilateral bodies on behalf of a Member State or an Intergovernmental Organization. They are granted the same badges / accreditation status as other representatives of the delegation of a Member State or an Intergovernmental Organization.

The range of tasks that a Youth Delegate is allocated with depends. Some may represent their respective Member State / IGO in multiple bodies (e.g. The Youth Delegate of the European Union, mandated to represent European youth voices for all engagements held in the UN HQ in New York), or specific bodies (e.g. The Youth Delegate of the Republic of Korea, mandated to represent the GA Third Committee only).

But at a minimum, Youth Delegates are responsible for delivering interventions in one or multiple bodies/conferences, taking notes on key meetings, participating in side events, and holding consultations with local or regional youth.

Approximately 35 Member States of the United Nations have already established Youth Delegate programs, with most of the selection and administrative tasks related to the program being handled by external NGOs, local United Nations Associations, or Youth Councils.

The European Union is currently the first and only IGO with Observer Status in the General Assembly to operate a formalized Youth Delegate Program. Their Youth Delegates are charged with representing youth voices of all Member States of the EU across numerous multilateral bodies.

Youth Delegates are considered distinct and separate from internship programs, as Youth Delegates are considered part of official delegations and often serve long-term mandates that last up to multiple years.

Youth Delegates are traditionally unpaid, but often supported with small daily stipends for transportation and lodging.

What can Youth Delegates do for My Observer Mission?

A Youth Delegate program provides incredible value to your Observer Mission through a variety of different ways. The benefits listed here have been proven through the numerous precedents of existing Youth Delegate programs.

1. Representation of Children and Youth Stakeholders

Youth Delegates can draft and deliver precise interventions highlighting the input of young people from Member States of your Intergovernmental Organizations, highlighting how the work of your Observer Mission can benefit young people.

2. Stakeholder Engagement

Youth Delegates can set up in person or virtual briefings and roundtables with local and regional youth organizations to gather direct and meaningful stakeholder insights, then feed those opinions directly into the multilateral engagement activities of your Mission.

They are also able to liaise with civil society organizations and Major Groups and Other Stakeholder Constituencies, allowing your Mission to participate in collaborative side events, conduct bilateral meetings, and write reports.

3. Mission Outreach

Youth Delegates often have massive social media presence among young people in their respective communities. They are able to develop and run youth-focused social media channels that broaden your Mission's online reach and advertise the work of your Mission among younger audiences.

They are also able to plan public events such as panels, workshops, cultural showcases, which draws in youth participants that highlight the thematic priorities of your Mission.

4. Reporting

Youth delegates are able to extend your mission's capacity to attend and engage with diverse multilateral bodies that was not previously possible due to constraints in Mission staffing. They are able to attend plenaries of meetings and other sessions to capture key developments, then draft summaries for your Mission's staff to view.

Precedents of Successful Youth Delegate Programs in the UN

1. European Union

The EU is the only Intergovernmental Organization with Observer Status in the UN General Assembly to operate a formal Youth Delegate Programme.

Each year, the European External Action Service and Member States nominate two Youth Delegates (under 30) through a joint call for applications. These delegates participate in the UN General Assembly and various other UN bodies for one year.

They are tasked with drafting interventions, liaising with EU youth networks, and reporting outcomes of regional youth consultations back to the EEAS.

2. Sweden

Since 2016, Sweden has reserved a seat in the High Level Political Forum and other UN Meetings for a Youth Delegate appointed in collaboration with the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations.

In October 2019, Katja Holböll delivered Sweden's first fully youth-authored statement at the UN Third Committee session on social development—representing over 700,000 youth across some 80 organizations

3. Norway

Since 1971, Norway has chosen two Youth Delegates nominated through the Norwegian Children and Youth Council, with one being nominated by political youth wings and one from non-partisan NGOs.

Selected Youth Delegates receive full accreditation to participate in all UNGA meetings, the Commission on Status of Women, and other high-level side events.

Youth Delegates of Norway helped draft Norway's 2017 GA resolution on youth and education, embedding

language on “skills for peace” in international curricula.

Moreover, over 100 former Norwegian Youth Delegates have gone on to senior roles in government and civil society, driving a 25% increase in youth-focused budget lines at their respective institutions.

More examples of successful Youth Delegate Programs are available here:

<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3926996?ln=en&v=pdf>

What We Propose

We propose to collaborate with your Permanent Observer Mission in the United Nations Headquarters to create a youth delegate program that would engage with conferences and multilateral bodies convened in the UN Headquarters in New York.

This is the deliverables we would seek from your Permanent Mission:

1. Provide accreditation to selected Youth Delegates through your Permanent Observer Mission, providing them with GA Observer ground passes through the Protocols and Liaison Service.
2. With prior coordination with your Permanent Observer Mission on the modalities and nature of the participation, allow selected youth delegates to attend intergovernmental meetings held in the United Nations Headquarters, especially under conferences and intergovernmental bodies relevant to young people and that is considered relevant to your organization's expertise. (e.g. GA Third Committee, High-Level Political Forum, ECOSOC Youth Forum).
3. With prior coordination with your Permanent Observer Mission on the substance of the statement, allow selected youth delegates to deliver interventions on said bodies on behalf of the Permanent Observer Mission under agenda items relevant to youths and that is considered relevant to your organization's expertise.
4. Offer engagement opportunities for selected Youth Delegates to address key events the Permanent Observer Mission will organize.

This is the deliverables we can provide to support the Youth Delegate Program:

1. We can help or fully manage outreach and advertising of the Youth Delegate Program, identifying qualified young people to represent your Mission.

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2. We can process applications for Youth Delegates and recommend the most qualified applicants to your Mission for approval. This process can also be done fully by your Mission if desired.
 3. We can help with onboarding and training of Youth Delegates, allowing them to be adequately informed on how they could engage in the UN, relevant Protocols, and other necessary logistical information.
 4. We can reimburse all costs and financial resources related to the provisions of the Youth Delegate program, such as their transport, accommodations, and daily expenses to ensure there is no financial burden of any form to your Mission.
 5. If desired, we can do the same to help institute Youth Delegate programs to your other Permanent Observer Missions (i.e. Geneva, Vienna, Convention Bodies in Bonn).
 6. If desired, we can manage the eRegistration system to provide necessary accreditation for selected Youth Delegates on behalf of your Permanent Mission.
 7. We are willing to provide these deliverables free of cost or any obligations.

Our deliverables are flexible and can be modified to meet the level of control your Mission would like to have in our Programs. The Selection of Delegates, outreach methods, and other administrative tasks related to the Youth Delegate program can be determined through active consultations with your Mission.

We are committed to identifying an approach that could minimize the additional workload and resources your Mission would devote for the implementation of this Proposal, while providing an opportunity for young people to engage with the United Nations.



Conclusion